

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 00152 071448Z

51

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 OMB-01 IO-14 EB-11 COME-00 NEA-11

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01

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R 071400Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 955

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0152

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR KS

SUBJECT: SOUTH KOREAN DEMARCHE TO LARG

1. SOUTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR TO TUNIS KYU SUP CHUNG CAME TO TRIPOLI THIS WEEK IN WAKE OF PUBLICATION JAN. 31 OF JOINT LIBYAN-NORTH KOREAN COMMUNIQUE ANNOUNCING AGREEMENT TO EXCHANGE AMBASSADORS. THIS IS FURTHER STEP FROM JOINT ANNOUNCEMENT OF RECOGNITION MADE MARCH 25, 1973. AMBASSADOR MET WITH CHARGE BEFORE AND AFTER HIS MEETING WITH MFA DIRECTOR OF ASIAN AFFAIRS TRAYKI.

2. CHUNG SAID HE ASKED TRAYKI WHAT ANNOUNCEMENT MEANT. WOULD NORTH KOREANS BE ESTABLISHING EMBASSY IN TRIPOLI? WHEN PRESSED TRAYKI ADMITTED NORTH KOREANS WOULD BE WELCOME IF THEY CHOSE TO DO SO. AMBASSADOR SAID HE WAS SORRY TO HEAR THIS. ALTHOUGH SOUTH KOREA HAD NO FORMAL RELATIONS WITH LIBYA, IN PAST IT HAD EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO ESTABLISH CLOSER TIES. COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WERE GOOD AND GROWING (\$6 MILLION EXPORTS TO LIBYA LAST YEAR), SOUTH KOREA HAD PARTICIPATED IN TRIPOLI TRADE FAIR, AND WAS PLANNING TO DO SO
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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 00152 071448Z

AGAIN NEXT MONTH. SOUTH KOREA COULD ONLY CONSIDER THIS UNFRIENDLY

ACTION.

3. ESSENCE OF TRAYKI'S REPLY HAD BEEN THAT FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM WAS SOUTH KOREA'S RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. THIS STOOD IN WAY OF CLOSER RELATIONS. AMBASSADOR HAD REFERRED TO LAST YEAR'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY VOTE ON KOREA, TO BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS UNDERWAY WITH NORTH KOREA, POINTED OUT THAT SOUTH KOREA WAS READY TO CONSIDER CLOSER RELATIONS WITH LIBYA DESPITE PRESENCE OF NORTH KOREANS, AND HAD EVEN HELD OUT POSSIBILITY OF HIGH-LEVEL SOUTH KOREAN VISIT. TRAYKI, HOWEVER, HAD NOT BEEN ENCOURAGING, AND HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT OVERRIDING CONSIDERATION FOR LIBYANS WAS PRESENCE OF ISRAELI EMBASSY IN SEOUL.

4. COMMENT: IT WILL OBVIOUSLY BE PAINFUL FOR SOUTH KOREA TO SEE NORTH KOREANS STEAL A MARCH ON THEM BY ESTABLISHING EMBASSY HERE DESPITE THEIR EFFORTS TO PREPARE GROUND. (THEY SENT A DELEGATION OF KOREAN MUSLIMS HERE LAST YEAR, AMBASSADOR SAID, BUT QADHAFI HAD BEEN TOO BUSY WITH EGYPTIAN MERGER TO SEE THEM.) MORE IMPRESSIVE TO LIBYAN LEADERS HAS BEEN NORTH KOREA'S 100 PERCENT SUPPORT OF ARAB CAUSE AGAINST ISRAEL. WE BELIEVE, AND CHUNG AGREED, THAT DECISION HAD BEEN FULLY STUDIED AND MADE AT HIGH LEVEL TO TRY PRESSURE TACTICS, WHICH WERE SO SUCCESSFUL IN FORCING AFRICAN BREAKS WITH ISRAEL, ON SOUTH KOREANS-- LIBYANS CAN BE EXPECTED TO TRY SAME TACTIC ELSEWHERE IF THEY SEE CHANCE OF SUCCESS. THEY ARE SINGLE-MINDED IN PURSUIT OF THEIR OBJECT, AND GOOD AS PLAYING ON ADVERSARY'S WEAKNESS. STEIN

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